

DARTON

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

RAMSAY MILLAR, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

1911.

Barnsley :

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To the Chairman and Members of the Darton Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in placing before you my Report for the year ending 31st December, 1911, on the health and sanitary condition of the district.

I estimate the population at the middle of last year to have been 9,400. The estimate for 1910 was about 400 in excess of the population as enumerated at the Census in 1911, and this has to be borne in mind when comparing the figures of 1911 with those of previous years.

Little change has occurred in the district during the past year, the occupation and social condition of the population remaining about the same from year to year. At the same time there has been an influx of a considerable number of pit-sinkers, a nomadic class whose health is generally good owing to their being a picked and young and vigorous class.

Poverty does not exist in the district practically speaking. Exception might be made in speaking of those incapacitated by infirmity and age, and thus in receipt of relief from the Guardians, and the old age pensioners, many of whom, in a district like this where rents and prices are high, are bound to be pinched at times. But where poverty exists in the homes of the able-bodied it is the habits that are to blame.

Birth-Rate.—The total number of Births registered in the district during the year was 288, made up of 138 female and 150 male. The rate was 30·6 per 1,000 of the population. This is the lowest rate recorded in the district, and the reduction is of course on a par with that going on all over the country. The birth-rate for England and Wales was 24·4. There were six illegitimate births registered, a number which is below the usuals, giving a rate of 2·8 per 100 births.

Death-Rate.—The total number of Deaths registered was 133, against 131 of the previous year, and an average of 118 for the last ten years. The rate was 14·1. In addition there were registered outside the district 16 deaths of residents in the Darton area, making the total number of deaths of persons belonging to the district 149. The net death-rate was 15·8, against a rate of 14·5 last year, and an average of 14·3 for the last ten years. The rate for England and Wales was 14·6. As will be seen from the tables the main causes of deaths were Diarrhœa, Bronchitis, Premature Birth, and Measles in that order. As to ages at death, there were 47 under one year and 16 between one and two years. Nearly half the total number, therefore, was of children under two years of age.

The number of deaths from Tuberculosis was 9, showing an increase of 2 over last year's list. While the death-rate from tuberculosis all over the country shows a decline, still in Darton this is not marked. Indeed the number has shown a tendency to rise, though of course in a small district it might be misleading to draw any definite conclusion from the figures of one or two years. Cancer caused 10 deaths, which is also above the usual number.

The Measles epidemic, which began about March, was very widespread, and the type very virulent, though I almost think we were lucky enough to get it when it had spent some of its force. At least we did not suffer so much as some of the surrounding districts. Nevertheless, 10 deaths occurred from the disease, the young children as usual suffering most. Preventive treatment of measles seems to be nearly hopeless, and it appears that attention must be paid to the treatment of individual cases to prevent serious results. Postponement of the disease till school age would reduce the mortality much, but the difficulty is to know how to accomplish this without the adoption of very drastic measures. Considering the prevalence of diarrhœa and measles, the death-rate for a mining district must be considered not unsatisfactory.

Infantile Mortality.—The total number of children dying under the age of twelve months was 47, giving an infantile mortality rate of 163. This is a decrease from the previous year, when the figure was 179, and one could wish that it was a sign that matters were improving. But it is very far from being satisfactory. It is impossible to lay down the high rate altogether to housing. It cannot be said that the houses of Kexbro' and Haigh are better as dwelling places than the houses in other parts of the district, and yet it is very seldom that fatal cases of diarrhœa occur in either of the two former places. To me the only difference appears to be in the cleanliness, which is a token no doubt of the care that is taken of the milk and food and children generally. The epidemic of diarrhœa—more marked than usual on account of the hot summer—caused in all 17 deaths, five of which, however, were of adults over 65 years of age. Pamphlets, as usual, were distributed to the homes of the people, with instructions as to warding off and treating the disease, but in spite of the instructions the epidemic recurs with dismal regularity. No one realises more than I do the difficulties mothers have to contend with in attending to their babies as scrupulously as they require. I refer to the continual round of household duties that requires attention, especially where there are school children, and sons and the father on different shifts. But mothers should realise that the baby has to come first every time if it is to have a fair chance of being healthy. And also that diarrhœa is a disease that arises from pollution of the house or the milk. But again I think it is time to have steps taken to make the yards of houses more sanitary. There are yards that are constantly being defiled by badly trained children, tenanted by miserable fowls, the inefficient and disgusting scavengers of the place. Paving of yards seems to me impossible in villages such as we have to deal with, but if every unclean yard were cleared of fowls, levelled and covered with ashes, it would be better in every way. Steps should be taken to enforce the removal of horse manure say every seven days, for there is no doubt that this is the main source of the plague of flies that crops up every summer. Thanks are due to Nurse Butterfield, who, during the

summer months, visited the homes of young babies and instructed the mothers as to the feeding and care of their children. In such visitation and in seeing that the instructions are carried out lie the chief hopes of betterment.

Infectious Diseases.—Seventy-two cases of Infectious Diseases were notified, namely, 9 of Diphtheria, 14 of Erysipelas, 37 of Scarlet Fever, and 12 of Enteric Fever. Their distribution was as follows:—

	Darton. Mapplewell. Barugh.				Kexbro'.			
Scarlet Fever	...	1	...	19	...	17	...	0
Diphtheria	3	...	0	...	5	...	1
Enteric Fever	...	3	...	6	...	3	...	0
Erysipelas	1	...	8	...	5	...	0

In Hospital were treated 17 cases, namely, 2 Diphtheria, 13 Scarlet Fever, and 2 Enteric Fever. In five cases of diphtheria antitoxin was used, four of these being treated at home and one transferred to Hospital. There is no doubt that the provision of this by the Council has proved a great benefit to the community.

With regard to the Enteric Fever cases, two cases occurred in one house, the disease probably being contracted outside the district. Another case arose, it was strongly suspected, from eating shell-fish. Another case was contracted in all probability when the patient was visiting a village where the disease was rife. The origin of the other cases could not be traced.

VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1911 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

YEAR	Population Estimated to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.				Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.		NETT DEATHS AT ALL AGES BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.	
		Number.	Rate.*	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.		Number.	Rate.*	Number.	Rate.*
				Number.	Rate per 1000 births, Registered	Number.	Rate.*				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
1901	7670	306	39.7	41	153	117	15.2		117	15.2	
1902	7735	296	38.2	48	162	134	17.3		134	17.3	
1903	7915	288	36.6	43	149	108	13.6		108	13.6	
1904	8062	270	33.4	44	163	123	15.2		123	15.2	
1905	8286	326	39.3	38	116	102	12.3		102	12.3	
1906	8990	298	33.1	41	137	98	10.9	8	106	11.7	
1907	9200	296	32.1	42	141	135	14.6	6	141	15.3	
1908	9350	306	32.7	39	127	116	12.4	16	132	14.1	
1909	9600	346	36.0	32	92	125	13.0	11	136	14.1	
1910	9800	323	32.4	58	179	131	13.3	11	142	14.5	
1911	9400	288	30.6	47	163	133	14.1	16	149	15.8	

* Rates in Columns 4, 8 and 11 calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

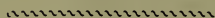
Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 4,358.

Total population at all ages ...	9,348	} At Census of 1911.
Number of inhabited houses ...	...
Average number of persons per house	...	

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING YEAR 1911.

CAUSES OF DEATH	DEATHS AT THE SUBJOINED AGES OF " RESIDENTS " WHETHER OCCURRING IN OR BEYOND THE DISTRICT.						
	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and up- wards.
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Measles.. ..	10	4	6	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever ..	3	..	1	2	..	..	..
Whooping- Cough ..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria and Croup ..	2	..	1	1	..	..	..
Erysipelas ..	3	2	..	..	..	1	..
Phthisis, (Pul- monary tuber- culosis) ...	7	..	1	1	1	4	..
Other tubercu- lous diseases...	2	1	..	..	..	1	..
Rheumat. Fever	3	..	..	2	..	1	..
Cancer, malign- ant disease..	10	..	..	..	..	5	5
Bronchitis ..	16	7	2	..	..	3	4
Broncho - Pneu- monia ..	3	2	1	..	..	..	..
Pneumonia (all other forms ..	9	2	4	1	1	1	..
Other Diseases of Respir. organs	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Diarrhœa and Enteritis ..	18	9	3	..	..	1	5
Cirrhosis of Liver	2	..	..	..	..	2	..
Congenital De- bility and Mal- formation, in- cluding Pre- mature Birth..	13	13	..	..	..	..	..
Violent Deaths, exclud. Suicide	5	..	1	..	3	..	1
Suicides ..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
All other causes	40	6	1	2	2	17	12
All causes ..	149	47	21	9	4	41	27

GENERAL SANITARY CONDITION OF THE DISTRICT.



Water Supply.—All the district supplied by the Barnsley Corporation and Penistone had an ample allowance during the very dry summer months, and though notices were put out urging economy in its use, there was never any real restriction. But Haigh, Swithen and Kexbro' suffered much. Though there is at Kexbro' a pure and full supply of Penistone water laid on, still from force or choice the surface wells are mostly used. No doubt to this cause was due an epidemic of Diarrhœa about the third week in June, one death being put down to it. The following houses in Kexbro' village belonging to Bretton Estate are supplied from shallow wells, and not from the Council's mains :—

Ball's Row	...	...	...	8
Seth Johnson's and adjoining cottage	...	...	...	2
J. Brook's cottage	...	...	...	1
North End	...	...	...	3
Lodge Fold	...	...	...	4
Collier Fold	...	...	...	7
Chapel Lane and Shop Row	...	...	...	6
A. Hawksworths	...	...	...	1
Hoyland's Farm and Cottages	...	...	...	3
Graham's cottage	...	...	...	1

making a total of 36 houses, the inhabitants of which have to help themselves mainly from sources liable to contamination, while an absolutely safe supply goes past their doors.

With regard to Swithen and Haigh, the same liability of the sources to contamination exists, and in addition there is great inconvenience from the water having to be fetched in some cases over half a mile. At Haigh isolated attacks of diarrhœa were attributed to the water. These attacks of diarrhœa are danger signals, and enteric fever is always liable to follow such outbreaks. None of the

cases of enteric in the district, however, could be put down to infected water. The Council have offered a supply of water from a stand pipe at the Parsonage to the cottages at Haigh and Swithen at half-price, in answer to an application from the owner about seven months since. This offer has not yet been accepted. The provision of a piped supply is a matter of great difficulty. The Council is in negotiation with the Wakefield Rural Council, and hope they will be able to supply the Haigh cottages from that district. At any rate it is evident that some supply will have to be found if the health of the inhabitants is to be safeguarded. One specific case of polluted water at Birthwaite Hall was dealt with. Here the reservoir—a dark closed chamber in a wood—was supplied with the overflow water from a cattle trough. It is no wonder that the water was described by the analyst as grossly polluted.

Sewerage.—New Sewers have been laid on for property at Bellevue and Pleasant View, Mapplewell. I am glad to report that the open sewer at Upper Carr Green, Mapplewell, has now been piped and covered in. In addition the sewage from a number of houses at Gawber, which formerly ran down Redbrook into an open ditch, has been led into the main sewer. The same applies to an open sewer behind New Street. There are still, however, several open sewers left, one at Hermit Lane, one at Bence Lane, Kexbro', and one at the bottom of Swallow Hill.

Sewage Disposal.—After an inspection of the Sewage Works the Council recommend that a new Sprinkler be erected as soon as possible on a much larger scale than the present one, and it is hoped that this will produce a satisfactory effluent.

Bye-Laws.—The revision of these has not yet been completed.

Adoptive Acts.—The Committee has not yet reported on this matter.

Slaughter Houses.—The total number on the register is 8. These premises are inspected frequently, and their condition on the whole is satisfactory. One butcher has had to be reprimanded for leaving offal about on his premises. Seven are licensed without any limit of time, and one is a yearly license. Systematic inspection of carcasses is difficult, owing to the varying times at which butchers kill, and owing to the slaughter houses being so far apart in different villages.

Cow-Sheds.—Of these there are 30 in the district. Two of the worst are not now used for milk cows. The majority are fairly good, but some require more frequent cleansing. Some again require structural alterations and draining, though progress in bringing them up to date is being made. It has not been found necessary to call in the veterinary surgeon who is at call in any suspicious cases.

Dwellings.—The number of houses built and certified for occupation during the year is 30. Their general character is four-roomed dwellings. There is not improvement in the size of the rooms, these generally being ridiculously tiny.

Thirteen water closets have been installed in connection with new property, while 10 have been constructed for old property. Out of these 23 there are 11 in connection with public or business premises. Progress in the conversion to the water carriage system is very slow in spite of the water charges being abolished.

Overcrowding.—This has cropped up time and again, and is dealt with as it arises. It seems that the only way to prevent it would be to ticket the houses with the permissible number of occupants. Rents, however, are very high in the newer and larger houses.

Damp Houses.—This is still a very prevalent evil in the district, but it is being attended to as quickly as possible.

Housing Act, 1909.—The number of houses inspected under this Act is 34. A number of them were damp, and several cases of overcrowding were come across and dealt with. The ventilation, which in some cases was deficient owing to windows which would not open, was attended to. Blocked up fire-places also were opened out. Ventilation of cellars, provision of proper spouting, and general cleansing were other matters that received attention. Five houses have been closed as unfit for habitation, due to the owner not providing sufficient closet accommodation.

Schools.—I am glad to report that a long-standing nuisance at Higham Schools, due to the pail closet system, has been remedied by the substitution of water closets. The Schools generally have been inspected regularly, and their condition and that of the closets found satisfactory. It was found necessary to close Darton Infant School and Kexbro' C. E. School for a time on account of the epidemic of Measles to which I have referred.

Factories and Workshops.—There are 11 in the district, an addition of one, a tailor's workshop, for which the owner has been ordered to provide sanitary accommodation. All the others are quite satisfactory.

Nuisances.—During the year 181 inspections were made. The number of nuisances reported during 1911 was 68. Informal notices were served in the case of 39, all of which were complied with. Statutory notices were served in seven cases, and five were complied with. No legal proceedings were taken during the year.

Offensive Trades.—There is one carried on in the district—tripe boiling. The premises have been inspected at frequent intervals and found in fairly good order.

Scavenging.—This has been satisfactory, very few complaints being made. Nightsoil, however, should be deposited further away from public roads, and spread and ploughed in more speedily than is the case at present.

Public Mortuary.—I have to draw attention to the need for this in the district. At present, any post mortem examination that has to be done is performed in the kitchen, and without entering on details it can be easily realized that such a proceeding is repugnant to one's sense of decency. There is a certain difficulty in the fact of the villages being a considerable distance apart, but an effort might be made to think out a scheme which would end the present deplorable state of things.

Consumption Sanatorium.—The scheme of the West Riding County Council has been suspended on account of the legislation of the Government. When this legislation will give actual results one cannot say. It is hoped that it will not be long delayed. As one of those who expect and hope for good results from sanatorium treatment, I want at the same time to emphasize the fact that it is not every case of consumption that is going to be cured by such treatment—not by a long way, and to urge the importance of preventative treatment.

I am pleased to state that the patient with tuberculosis whom the Council sent away on my recommendation during the summer, returned to work some months ago, and remains in good health.

I have to thank Mr. Taylor for his assistance both with my work and the preparation of this Report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. MILLAR,

Medical Officer of Health.

Darton,

15th March, 1912.

